the tide goes down; so that it would only be allowed to mix with the river when on its passage to the sea, the gates being closed before the tide changes. By this plan none of the sewer water could travel back to London. With this view very deep sewers might be made, of sufficient capacity to take a large quantity of water in the most direct way, and to receive the contents of all the sewers crossing the lines. For example: one great line might be made to commence at Paddington, going along the New-road by King's Cross (or Battle-bridge), and there taking the Fleet Ditch; from thence, running towards the east by Islington, passing under the New River and the Canal, through Hackney and Bromley, and passing below the river Lea to its great receptacle: the distance from Paddington by this route would be only about 12 miles, being 6 miles less than the present course, which has to travel with the river, by all its windings and bendings, round the Isle of Dogs, and all other obstructions. Another great line might be carried along Oxford-street to the bottom of Holborn, where it could be made sufficiently deep to take the contents of that part of the Fleet Ditch, and which might be lowered from the river to run in that direction; then to continue across Smithfield, the grounds of the Charterhouse, along Old-street by Bethnal-green, and so eastward, to join the great outlet. This would give an opportunity of draining many parts that are in a very crowded state, and at present without sufficient means of drainage."

For the south side of London he proposed a similar deep sewer running towards the east, on the other side of the Thames.

The writer afterwards makes some observations on the means this arrangement would afford of trying experiments as to extracting some part of the immense quantity of fertilizing matter that is now wasted, but he very properly urges that the first consideration is to get rid of the refuse, without poisoning the river.

A meeting of the commissioners was held on Thursday, the 5th, and it will be seen in the report of their proceedings which is appended, that they directed the surveyor to submit full details of his plan to a special court to be held on the 23rd. Every willingness was professed to give it fair play, and, although some of the commissioners are very angry with the surveyor, and threaten his dismissal unless the first letter be withdrawn, they have agreed to postpone the consideration of his offence till his plan is fully before them.

The tunnel sewer is not without its difficulties and objections, but we are disposed, nevertheless, to think that the idea (however it may be modified) must be carried out now or hereafter. Lord Ebrington presided, and we would compliment his lordship on the good feeling and pleasant manner which he exhibited.

July 5.—A report was received from Mr. Gotto, assistant-surveyor, on the subject of a complaint that had been made by the Speaker of the House of Commons, of the offensive odours arising in the neighbourhood of the Houses of Parliament. He attributed a portion of the same to St. Margaret's churchyard, which was completely filled up with bodies in a state of decomposition, having saturated the soil with gases penetrating into the sewers; and from the inquiries he had made, it appeared that particular gullies were offensive at one time and not at another, which might be accounted for by the wind down one grating forcing the gases up another.

Mr. Chadwick moved that the subject be deferred to the next court, which was agreed to.

Sir Edward Milne, from the Westminster Improvement Commissioners, attended the court, and wished to know the views of this commission as to the general system of drainage that would be finally adopted for this district, as they were unable to commence operations until some general plan should be laid down. They should be very shortly in a position to open the new Victoria street, but no builder would look at it until such plan was laid down.

Lord Ebrington promised speed.

On the resolution of the general committee of June 28 being read—"That the communication of Mr. Phillips to the court, without reference to the merits of any scheme alluded to therein, is wholly unwarrantable; and that unless the next court shall receive an assurance from Mr. Phillips, that his letter is unequivocally withdrawn, and regret be expressed to the court for the nature of the communication, it be recommended to the court that Mr. Phillips should not continue in the service of the commission,"

Lord Ebrington said that this subject involved two questions, viz., the suggestion of a plan by an officer who had devoted much time to the subject, having had great facilities of local knowledge and experience; and secondly, certain expressions he had used at the time. Before inquiring into the latter, it would be for them to consider whether the outline of the plan so drawn out should be accompanied with details and estimates. He understood that Mr. Phillips had already got a sketch drawn out, and therefore he (Lord E.) thought the best course would be that a separate day should be fixed for their consideration. They should take care that the public service should not be damaged by any personal matters, however unfitting those feelings might be for the dignity and proper working of the commission. He would accordingly move, that the details of the plan should be brought up on the 23rd, and that the same be previously printed.

Mr. Leslie seconded the proposition of the chairman, without then expressing any opinion on the plan.

Mr. Byng hoped that before proceeding in the question, they should have both plans (Mr. Austin's and Mr. Phillips's) laid before them.

Mr. Chadwick said Mr. Austin had produced no plan for the entire drainage of London.

Sir H. de la Beche vindicated the acts of the Survey Committee, who, he contended, had given no opinion whatever on any particular plan. Whatever was proved to be the best would be adopted. They were merely the trustees for the public, to do that which was the best for their interests.

A long desultory conversation ensued on the subject, in which Mr. Chadwick, the Rev. W. Murray, Mr. C. Johnson, Mr. Slaney, and Dr. Arnott took part, and the motion was finally carried.

The following resolution of the General Committee was then read:—"That it be reported to the court, that the committee, taking into consideration the zealous and efficient services of Mr. Hertslet to the present and past commissions of sewers, would be happy if Mr. Hertslet would feel willing to continue in their service; but in any case, for their own satisfaction, the commissioners would wish to receive from Mr. Hertslet any communication he may think useful to make for their information."

Lord Ebrington moved its adoption by the court, and expressed the happiness he should experience if Mr. Hertslet should continue in the service, but would not press him to do so against his better judgment, or with any sacrifice of his health. Should he persevere in his determination to retire, he trusted they would follow the same course in the question of his retirement as they had formerly adopted in the case of Mr. Roe.—Mr. Byng condemned such a course, in the formation of a nondescript office; he had the word of Mr. Hertslet that he now sought no pension.—Mr. Hertslet said he had not waived his right on that ground, but in his present position he was too proud to receive a pension out of the ratepayers' money.

Mr. Bullar said if by any modification of the onerous duties Mr. Hertslet could be induced to remain in the commission, he was sure it would receive their unanimous approval.

After a few words from Mr. Slaney, the motion was put and carried unanimously.

Mr. Hertslet believed such a course would be attended with delay. He had drawn up some reasons for his retirement, which he now had in his pocket, but as they might apply to the future operations of the commission, he begged at once to retire from the service, and that they should appoint his successor.

After a long discussion, the following resolution on the subject of improvement rates was agreed to:—"That a separate department be constituted for the purpose of calculating and preparing improvement rates for all the works performed for the benefit of ratepayers, in such a manner as to diffuse the cost of each over a series of years, and apportion the amount to each ratepayer in the measure, as nearly as possible, of the benefit he derives from them."

ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH, BIRMINGHAM.—An architect, through the local *Journal*, calls attention to the dangerous state of the spire of this church, and its rapid decay. On examination, he finds its departure from the perpendicular to be far greater than it was, and its vibration during bell ringing to be rather alarming. The whole edifice is thought to require restoration or rebuilding, which there are surely people in Birmingham quite rich enough and ready enough to do.

AN ATTEMPT TO EXHIBIT THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF ARCHITECTURAL AND PICTORIAL EFFECT IN REFERENCE TO STREETS, AND TO TOWNS GENERALLY.*

I HAVE pointed to natural principles in reference to streets, but it must be added, that on these principles the art itself is based; for architecture, rightly considered, is an ideal imitation of a prototype, which may be found in the works of creation, which furnishes it with analogies. It is not the literal forms that architecture copies, but the principles they disclose; these are the rules of art, the geometry of which is but an instrument in its hands. In nature, designs may be everywhere discovered, and a secret rule which, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, altereth not. The first business of the student is to study these laws, and trace her beauty to its spring. Nature presents us with models eminently fit for our purpose; scarcely any of her objects, her groupings, or her combinations, but what are suggestive of principles for our guidance in architecture. "There is not one single object in nature," says an eloquent writer upon art, "which is not capable of conveying ideas of beauty, and which, to the rightly-perceiving mind, does not present an incalculably greater number of beautiful than of deformed parts."

To this appropriating of the principles of nature true art owes her origin, and it is essential to her existence and progress. Nature is the true genius of architecture; her beauty is the muse—the inspiration of the architect: by a close study of nature, I consider the resources of the art may be greatly extended, its capabilities increased and enriched, and effects produced beyond anything that now exists or that the world has yet seen;—whilst, on the other hand, if we lose sight of these principles, all must become anarchy in the mind, which will be a prey to the most incongruous and whimsical associations.

Versed in these principles, and enamoured of their beauty, the student will have no difficulty in applying them to art. He will perceive that unity and variety are the ingredients of beauty; that a building or street should have its various component parts strictly subordinate to the general design, and harmonizing one with the other, though each a distinct composition in itself; and in designing what in stone and wood is to give pleasure to the mind, he will consider the relative effects of form, proportion, and arrangement, as they exist before him in creation, and work in accordance with those principles of beauty and harmony which are developed there.

If I am correct in this, I shall not be deemed hasty in my condemnation of the invariable use of the straight line in streets at the present day. What, I would ask, forms the chief beauty of a river or stream? Do those splendid phenomena, the magnificent characteristics of mountain scenery, owe their beauty to the straight line? The rocky pass, the verdant valley, the interesting combination of glade and thicket, woods, groves, hills, and lakes,—have not these been looked upon by the architect in vain? Nature seems to abhor a straight line as she is said to do a vacuum. Yet while every leaf, every blade of glass, every part of the human body, presents us with some beautiful curve for imitation in works of art, both streets and houses might be pointed out in which scarce any line but the straight one can be found.

If I wanted an example of a street in which every precept of nature had been unheeded, I could not do better than instance a well-known one in Liverpool, viz., Shaw-street, than which, perhaps, nothing more monotonous could be found. Formed on level ground, or nearly so, of one straight line, and, what is the most strange, though the houses are not enlisted under one design in the shape of a terrace, with the usual arrangement of centre and wings, the houses, as if cast in one mould, are from end to end fac-similes of each other. I appeal to any gentleman who has made the observation, whether he ever experienced in that street any of those sensations of pleasure that a fine street is calculated to awaken in every cultivated mind. With the exception of a couple of Ionic columns as a door-case to each house, it is one dead merely perforated wall from end to end, devoid of all provision

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* See p. 293, *ante*.

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